

BRILLIANT QUACKS

August 18, 2015 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article)

Being deceived by quackery is not always an issue of intellect and education. It happens to the educated as well as the non-educated, to the credentialed as well as the non-credentialed, to the experienced as well as the inexperienced.

It is easy for a man to be deceived. This is a fallen world filled with spiritual darkness under the control of an angel of darkness who manifests himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14).

And the Bible warns that the human heart is “deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

The fallen human heart is not ultimately committed to truth. It believes what it wants to believe, and there are many motives for believing a lie, including financial gain, pride, prestige, conformity, and security or avoiding trouble.

Thirty-three times the New Testament warns about deception.

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you” (Matthew 24:4).

“For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple” (Romans 16:18).

“That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:14).

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13).

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, WHICH DECEIVETH THE WHOLE WORLD: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him”(Revelation 12:9).

I learned the power of deception as a young man when I was deceived by the claims of reincarnation promoted by the Self-Realization Fellowship Society. I was deceived by testimonials and by a technique of hypnotism that seemed to provide objective evidence. I saw later that I had been motivated to believe in reincarnation by my rebellion against the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is possible to believe a lie and to believe it with all of one’s heart.

Following are three brilliant men who were deceived into seeing what they wanted to see.

PERCIVAL LOWELL

Percival Lowell (1865-1916) was born into a wealthy, high-society Boston family, graduated from Harvard, was a brilliant mathematician and successful businessman, traveled widely in the Far East, learned several languages, and kept company with affluent, influential people.

Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was published when Lowell was a boy, and he accepted the doctrine of evolution wholeheartedly.

Later Lowell's imagination was stirred by Italian astronomer Giovanni Schiaparelli's 1893 book *Life on Mars* and the report of supposed "channels" on the red planet. Seeing this as proof that life existed on other planets, Lowell set out to bring this "evidence" home for the evolutionary cause. He used his wealth to construct an astronomical observatory with a 24-inch telescope in the American west near the Grand Canyon. It was completed in 1894, and from then until his death 22 years later, he studied Mars and published reports and books.

Eventually Lowell "saw" and named 700 canals on Mars and came to believe that Martians were building the canals in an attempt to save their planet. He even deduced many fascinating details about the lives of the Martians.

The one small problem with all of this is that there are no canals on Mars, and there are no Martians. This has been proven by more powerful telescopes and by space exploration since the first successful flyby of the planet by NASA's Mariner 4 probe in 1965. Currently there are five orbiters circling Mars and two NASA exploration vehicles crawling on the surface. There are no canals or Martians.

How could an intelligent, well-educated man see canals and alien civilizations that do not exist? The answer is that he saw what he wanted to see.

The same phenomenon that allows an atheist to see evidence for Darwinian evolution allows someone to see evidence for a quack cure.

ANDREW IVY

Andrew Ivy (1893-1978) was one of the most prominent medical doctors in America in the first half of the twentieth century. His Ph.D. and M.D. were from the University of Chicago. He was the head of physiology and pharmacology at Northwestern University Medical School, vice president of the University of Illinois, and president of the American Physiological Society for three years.

The author of 2,000 scientific articles, he was once the most cited scientist in the world. His textbook on peptic ulcers remains a classic. He was famous for helping to prosecute Nazi doctors accused of torture and murder. He was said to have been "the most famous doctor in the country" (Jonathan Moreno, *Undue Risk*, p. 266).

Beginning in 1949, after meeting Stevan Durovic of Yugoslavia, Ivy began promoting a new cancer treatment called krebiozen. Durovic claimed that it was made with a serum collected from horses injected with a bacterium called *Actinomyces bovis* (Paul Offit, *Do You Believe in Magic? The Sense and Nonsense of Alternative Medicine*, p. 168). He claimed to have successfully tested it on dogs and cats with cancer.

Ivy was convinced that the cure was real, because he had studied dogs with cancer and believed that they produced a natural anti-cancer substance, though he couldn't find it. Now he was convinced that Durovic had found the missing substance.

Though Durovic refused to reveal to Dr. Ivy how he made the extract, claiming that it was a commercial secret, Ivy soon began trials on humans. In March 1951, he announced at a press conference that he had treated 22 patients with krebiozen and had found "dramatical clinical improvement." He failed to say that 10 of the patients had died of cancer!

Ivy trusted Durovic's supposed test results, but he was lying. For example, Durovic claimed in 1959 and again in 1961 that a Mr. Taietti was "well and active," yet Taietti had died of bladder cancer in 1955.

More than 4,200 cancer patients were treated with krebiozen, but studies began to find that the treatment was worthless.

A study by the FDA of the Krebiozen Foundation's records of 1,526 patients found only three that *might* have shown slight benefit from the treatment, and these were questionable.

When the National Cancer Institute and FDA analyzed the content of krebiozen, it turned out to be nothing more than mineral oil. A powder supplied by the Krebiozen Foundation was composed of creatine monohydrate, "a normal constituent of muscle and a common laboratory compound purchasable for \$.30 a gram, approximately \$10 for a 1-ounce bottle."

By trusting krebiozen treatments instead of traditional care, patients died of treatable cancer. For example, Orme Moritz refused surgery for breast cancer and accepted treatment with krebiozen for a year. By the time she had an operation, it was too late. The cancer had spread, and she soon died (James Holland, M.D., "The Krebiozen Story").

In 1964, Durovic moved to Switzerland and lived off of the money he had stashed away in a Swiss bank account.

Until his death in 1978, Andrew Ivy remained convinced that Krebiozen was a cure for cancer.

LINUS PAULING

Linus Pauling (1901-1994) taught at the California Institute of Technology for more than 40 years and was the first person to be the recipient of two unshared Nobel prizes. He also won the National Medal of Science, the Medal for Merit, awarded by the U.S. President, and received honorary degrees from Cambridge, the University of London, and the University of Paris. He

appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine and was “hailed as one of the greatest scientists who had ever lived.”

At age 30, Pauling won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry for his research into chemical bonds. That year he received the Langmuir Prize for the most outstanding young chemist in the United States and became the youngest person elected to the National Academy of Sciences. “Paul’s idea revolutionized the field, marrying quantum physics with chemistry” (Paul Offit, *Do You Believe in Magic?* p. 49). When asked to comment on Pauling’s findings, Albert Einstein shrugged his shoulders and said it was too complicated for him.

In 1949, Pauling discovered that the hemoglobin in sickle cell anemia has a slightly different electrical charge that affects how it reacts with oxygen. This marked the birth of molecular biology.

In 1951, Pauling demonstrated that proteins in the cell are folded.

In 1962, he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in pushing the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

But at age 65, Pauling became the proponent of taking mega doses of vitamin C for health and longevity.

He was influenced by Irwin Stone, a man who called himself a doctor but was credentialed only through a non-accredited correspondence school. Stone recommended that Pauling take 3,000 milligrams of vitamin C a day for longevity.

Pauling testified that he felt much better and didn’t suffer colds, so he increased his daily intake of vitamin C to 18,000 milligrams.

In his 1970 book *Vitamin C and the Common Cold*, Pauling recommended 3,000 milligrams daily and claimed that the cold would be eradicated. He saw vitamin C usage as “a step toward a better world.” The sale of vitamin C exploded. “By the mid-1970s, 50 million Americans were following Pauling’s advice” (Paul Offit, *Do You Believe in Magic?* p. 52).

But multiple medical studies have failed to find any correlation between vitamin C and the cure of the common cold.

“Researchers at the University of Maryland gave 3,000 milligrams of vitamin C every day for three weeks to eleven volunteers and a sugar pill (placebo) to the others. Then they infected volunteers with a common cold virus. All developed cold symptoms of similar duration. At the University of Toronto, researchers administered vitamin C or placebo to 3,500 volunteers. Again, vitamin C didn’t prevent colds... In 2002, researchers in the Netherlands administered multivitamins or placebo to more than 600 volunteers. Again, no difference. At least fifteen studies have now shown that vitamin C doesn’t treat the common cold” (Paul Offit, *Do You Believe in Magic?* p. 53).

Again, extensive medical tests found no benefit from vitamin C for cancer patients. Charles Moertel of the Mayo Clinic, who performed two different tests, said, “We were unable to show a therapeutic benefit of high-dose vitamin C.”

Not only did Pauling not accept the results of the tests, he consulted lawyers about suing Moertel.

Next, Pauling claimed that mega doses of vitamin C, vitamin A, vitamin E, plus selenium and beta-carotene, could treat most diseases, including heart disease, hepatitis, polio, tuberculosis, chickenpox, meningitis, arthritis, diabetes, strokes, tetanus, typhoid, leprosy, rabies, and AIDS.

This is contrary to the finding of dozens of tests.

In fact, multiple, extensive studies have shown that those taking vitamins and supplements, particularly in mega doses, were “more likely to die from lung cancer or heart disease than those who didn’t take them” (Paul Offit, M.D., *Do You Believe in Magic?* p. 59). This was the conclusion of a 1994 study of 29,000 Finnish men, a 1996 study by the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center of 18,000 people, a 2004 study by the University of Copenhagen of 170,000 people, a 2005 study by Johns Hopkins School of Medicine of 136,000 people, a 2007 study by the National Cancer Institute of 11,000 men, a 2011 study by the University of Minnesota of 39,000 older women, and a 2011 study by the Cleveland Clinic of 36,000 men. In the latter study, those who took vitamin E had a 17 percent greater risk of prostate cancer.

A 2005 study examined 9,000 people who took high-dose vitamin E to prevent cancer. The study, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, found that those who took the supplement were “more likely to develop heart failure than those who didn’t.”

The aforementioned University of Copenhagen study concluded, “We could not find evidence that antioxidant supplements can prevent gastrointestinal cancers; on the contrary, they seem to increase overall mortality.”

The University of Minnesota study found that those who took multivitamins and supplements “died at rates higher than those who didn’t.”

A 2008 review of all existing studies involving more than 230,000 people “found that vitamins increased the risk of cancer and heart disease” (Offit, p. 59).

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